(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The draft notification GSR 340(E) dated 27.5.05 elicited responses from NGOs' manufactures of Common Salt Scientists etc. The Ministry consulted scientists, NGOs, and examined in detail the diverse comments received from various sources on merit, through an expert Committee.

The Central Committee for Food Standards (CCFS), a multi-stake holder body constituted under the PFA Act, to advise the Central Government on all matters arising out of implementation of PFA Act had examined the proposal for imposing restrictions on sale of common salt and for compulsory iodization of common salt for human consumption. The Committee also examined the draft notification issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare *vide* notification GSR 340(E) dated 27.05.2005 for inviting objections and suggestions in this regard and the Committee recommended finalization of this notification.

Iodine is a micronutrient which should be available in adequate quantity daily so as to prevent Iodine Deficiency Disease (IDD). Though it is true that the hilly regions are more affected but the plains region are also deficient in it. Salt iodization is the most rational approach to ensure prevention of IDD. Salt iodization is essential also to ensure freedom from preventable brain damage.

Malpractices in medical Institutions

1876. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in order to get the permission of the Medical Council of India, at the time of inspection, some medical colleges are showing teaching staff who originally belongs to some other medical colleges;

(b) whether the officials of the Medical Council of India are involved in this; and

(c) whether Government are simplifying the procedure regarding obtaining permission to start medical colleges in the private sector?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) While considering inpsection reports of various medical

colleges seeking permission/renewal of permission for admission of fresh batch of students, Medical Council of India observed that large numbers of doctors were claiming employment as medical teachers in more than one medical college. The teachers who were found indulged in such practice have been penalized by MCI by temporarily erasing their names from Indian Medical Register for three years and publishing their names on MCI website.

(b) MCI has denied involvement of any of its official in the matter.

(c) Review of procedure regarding grant of permission to start medical colleges in private and public sectors is an ongoing process.

Patent for Anti-AIDS medicines

†1877. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of HIV infected people in the country at present;

(b) whether there has been 32 per cent increase in the cases of HIV/ AIDS and if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the people infected with HIV need anti-retroviral therapy;

(d) whether an amount of 3 crore 70 lakh dollars received from the global fund for anti-retroviral therapy was not utilized by NACO; and

(e) whether Government would prevent Jiled Pharmaceuticals from obtaining a patent for 'Tenefoveer', an important drug for AIDS, at the request of health workers throughout the world?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) and (b) According to the Annual Sentinel Surveillance conducted during 2005, an estimated number of 5.2 million persons in the age group 15-49 years are infected with HIV, whereas the estimated number of HIV infection during the year 2004 was 5.1 million.

(c) An HIV infected person needs anti-retroviral therapy during the stage of advance immuno-supression when CD 4 count drops to below 200.

(d) Under the Global Fund Round II, III & IV, a total of Rs. 12.21 crores were sanctioned during the first phase of the project for procurement of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.